

A RESOURCE MANAGER FOR PROVIDING USER-DEPENDENT ACCESS  
CONTROL FOR A NETWORK OF CONSUMER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

ABSTRACT

5           A method of providing a user-dependent access control system for a  
network of consumer electronic devices. In one embodiment, the method is  
implemented as a software resource manager which provides a centralized  
resource allocation, reservation and access control functionalities for a home  
server of a home entertainment system. Particularly, user applications of the  
10 home server receive service requests from a user or other entities, and  
determines whether any predetermined policy statements would be violated if  
the requested services are performed. The software resource manager also  
determines whether the necessary resources are available. If the requested  
services do not violate any policy statements and if the necessary resources are  
15 available, the software resource manager then sends appropriate control  
signals to the source and destination devices causing them to perform the  
requested media services. In one embodiment, the devices of the network are  
hidden from the users and, thus, the users have no direct control over the  
devices. In this manner, resources of a network of consumer electronic device  
20 can be protected from misuse.